

## **Amendments to the Claims**

### **Listing of Claims:**

1-14 (canceled).

15 (currently amended). In combination, a base and a preformed, self supporting ~~article~~ substrate supported directly on the base, the base consisting essentially of a cabinet style base with vertical walls configured with an opening between the vertical walls and the preformed, self supporting ~~article~~ substrate resting directly on the vertical walls in a substantially horizontal orientation and covering the opening between the vertical walls, the preformed, self supporting ~~article~~ substrate consisting essentially of a mixture that includes cement, expanded polystyrene and water.

16 (canceled).

17 (currently amended). The combination of claim ~~any of claims~~ 15 ~~or~~ 16, wherein the preformed, self-supporting ~~article~~ substrate consists essentially of a formed article formed from a mixture having a formulation with the following ratio of materials: 14 cu feet of small expanded polystyrene beads, 230 pounds Portland cement, 70 pounds fly ash, 18 gallons water, and a selected amount of reinforcement.

18 (previously submitted). The combination of claim 17, wherein the preformed, self-supporting ~~article~~ substrate has the following relative dimensions: 48 inches length, 25 inches wide and 1.5 inches thick.

19 (new). A method of forming a tiled countertop, comprising the steps of

providing a base that comprises vertically extending walls with an opening at the top of the walls,

providing a preformed, self supporting tile substrate consisting essentially of a mixture that includes cement, expanded polystyrene and water,

placing the preformed, self supporting tile substrate directly onto the base, with the preformed, self supporting tile substrate in direct contact with the vertical walls of the base and covering the opening at the top of the walls, and thereafter

placing one or more tiles on the preformed self supporting tile substrate.

20 (new). The method of claim 19, wherein the step of providing a preformed, self-supporting tile substrate consists essentially of forming a mixture with the following ratio of materials: 14 cu feet of small expanded polystyrene beads, 230 pounds Portland cement, 70 pounds fly ash, 18 gallons water, and a selected amount of reinforcement.